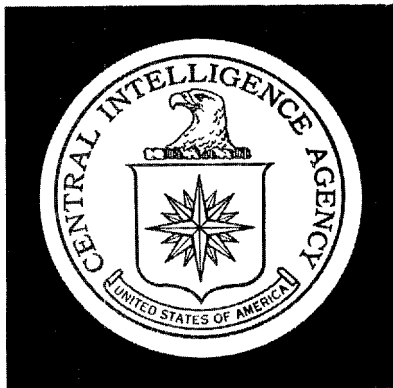


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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

NSA review completed

ARMY review(s) completed.

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HIGHLIGHTS

The Directorate has decided to reject constituent assembly proposals that it amend seven articles in the decree law which established the assembly as the constitution drafting body.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:

A road clearing operation by elements of the US 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment was attacked by a Viet Cong force of undetermined size on 5 December (Para. 1). Viet Cong terrorists attacked the Tan Son Nhut Airfield for the second consecutive day on 4 December (Para. 2). Operation GERONIMO I concluded on 5 December in Phuc Yen Province (Para. 3). MACV has accepted as "probable" the headquarters of the 10th NVA Division. It is believed located in the Kontum/Pleiku/Cambodian border area (Paras. 4-5).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:

On 1 December, the Directorate decided not to accept the constituent assembly's request for amendments to the basic decree that governs the assembly's activities (Paras. 1-2).

III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:

Two US aircraft were lost over North Vietnam as DRV air defense forces continued to offer stiff resistance to US strike aircraft (Paras. 1-2). On 2 December, North Korean pilots were active over North Vietnam for the fourth time (Paras. 3-4).

IV. Other Communist Military Developments:

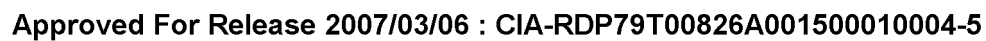
There is nothing of significance to report.

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Early on 5 December, elements of the US 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment on a routine road-clearing operation on Route 2 in northern Phuoc Tuy Province about 35 miles east of Saigon were attacked by a Viet Cong force of undetermined size. When the enemy attack broke off, the American force made a sweep of the area and rounded up a large number of prisoners. The Americans also discovered a Viet Cong base camp, seized eight tons of rice, and destroyed a series of bunkers and tunnels. Communist losses were four killed, 41 captured, and 278 suspects detained. American casualties were two killed and two wounded.

2. Viet Cong terrorists hit the Tan Son Nhut airfield near Saigon on 4 December for the second consecutive night. A US security patrol ran into small arms and automatic weapons fire near the western border of the sprawling base. Eleven Communists were killed in a series of sharp fire fights. Nine other Communists were tracked down with the assistance of guard dogs. Only one American was reported wounded.

3. Four US Army battalions concluded Operation GERONIMO I in Phu Yen Province on 5 December. Cumulative casualties for this search-and-destroy operation which began on 3 October were 16 Americans killed and 78 wounded compared to 150 Viet Cong killed and 76 captured.

MACV Accepts Another NVA Division Headquarters in South Vietnam

4. MACV has accepted as "probable" the headquarters of the 10th NVA Division. It is believed to be located in the Kontum/Pleiku/Cambodian border area and has an estimated strength of 200 men. The 10th Division reportedly has three NVA regiments subordinate to it. These are the 88th, 95th "B," and the possible 101st "C" regiments; the latter was accepted only last week in the order of battle.

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5. Although the acceptance of the 10th NVA Division does not increase the number of NVA personnel in the South by very much, it is one more indicator of the fleshing out of the NVA/VC main force structure into conventional military formations. There are now nine division level units in the Communists' main forces. These include five confirmed, one probable and one possible NVA division, and two confirmed VC divisions. Most of these units, despite their designation as either NVA or VC, have mixtures of troops from both North and South Vietnam. They are generally designated as NVA or VC units on the basis of the composition of their headquarters or the fact that either southerners or northerners predominate in the units.

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The Directorate has decided to reject proposals submitted to it by the constituent assembly that it agree to amend seven articles in the decree law which established the assembly. One of the most controversial articles in the decree, Article 20, empowers the Directorate to amend the draft constitution before it becomes law.

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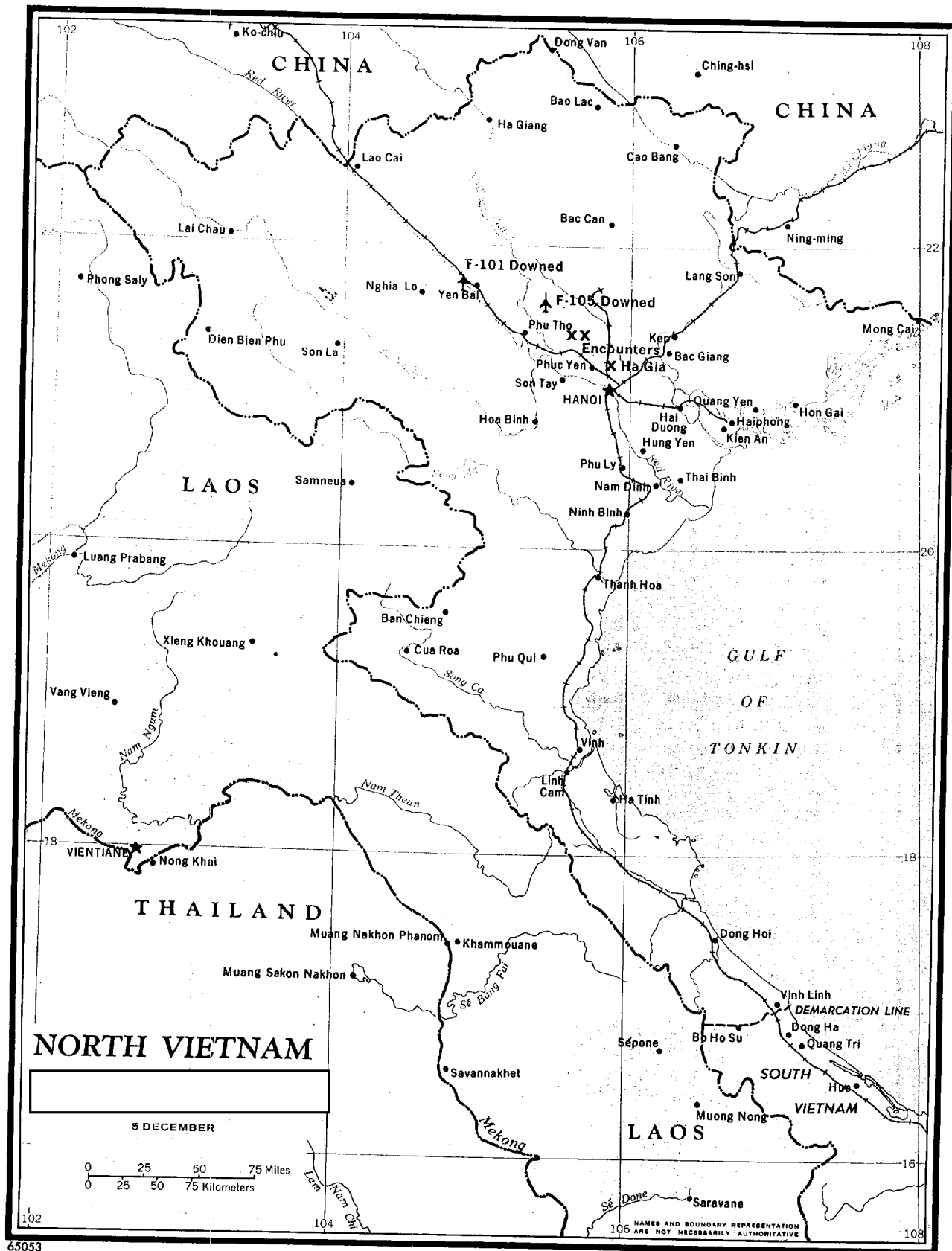
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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. North Vietnamese air defense forces, despite poor weather, continued to offer stiff resistance on 5 December to US strike aircraft attempting to penetrate the Hanoi area. An RF-101 photoreconnaissance plane was lost to unknown causes 84 miles northwest of the capital after completing a bomb damage assessment mission over the Ha Gia POL site. An F-105 strike aircraft was also downed for unknown reasons 49 miles northwest of Hanoi.

2. Returning USAF pilots reported at least three encounters with DRV fighters; no planes are known to have been lost by either side. A group of four F-105s were attacked by two MIG-21s about 30 miles northwest of Hanoi. The MIGs fired at least two heat-seeking missiles, but no US planes were hit. Four more F-105s encountered four MIG-21s in virtually the same location six hours later but managed to clear the area without incident. Three F-105s bombing AAA positions near the Ha Gia POL site were chased by a single Communist fighter but were not damaged.

Korean Flight Activity in the DRV

3. On 2 December, North Korean pilots--at least 17--were noted for the fourth time conducting area familiarization flights near Hanoi. Since that date, weather conditions have permitted US aircraft to be active in this area and the Koreans have apparently remained on the ground. There is no indication in SIGINT that any North Korean pilots have been involved in the most recent round of aggressive activity by the DRV Air Force.

4. The experience of US pilots who have been in aerial combat with North Vietnamese airmen suggests another reason why North Korean aviators may have been brought to the DRV. There have been indications in certain flight maneuvers executed by the Vietnamese pilots that they may not have the physical strength to fly the Soviet-built aircraft to their maximum limits. If this is the case, the generally larger Koreans might be of use in improving the capabilities of the DRV fighter force.

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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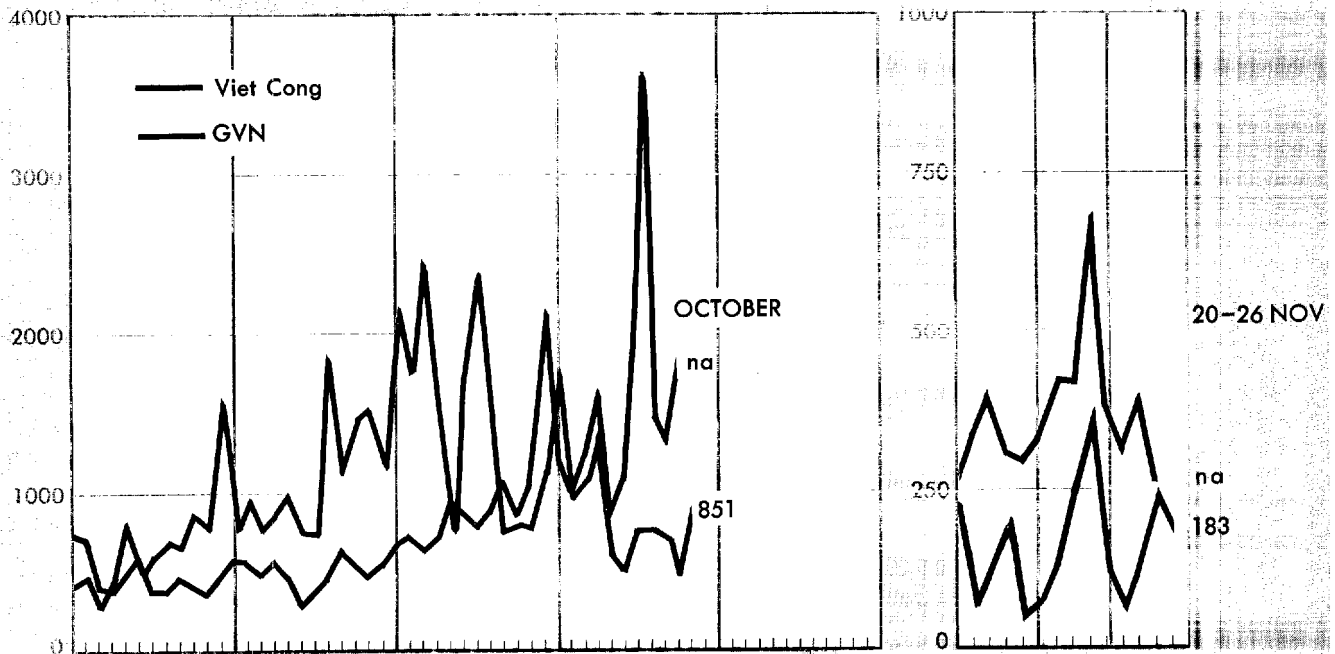
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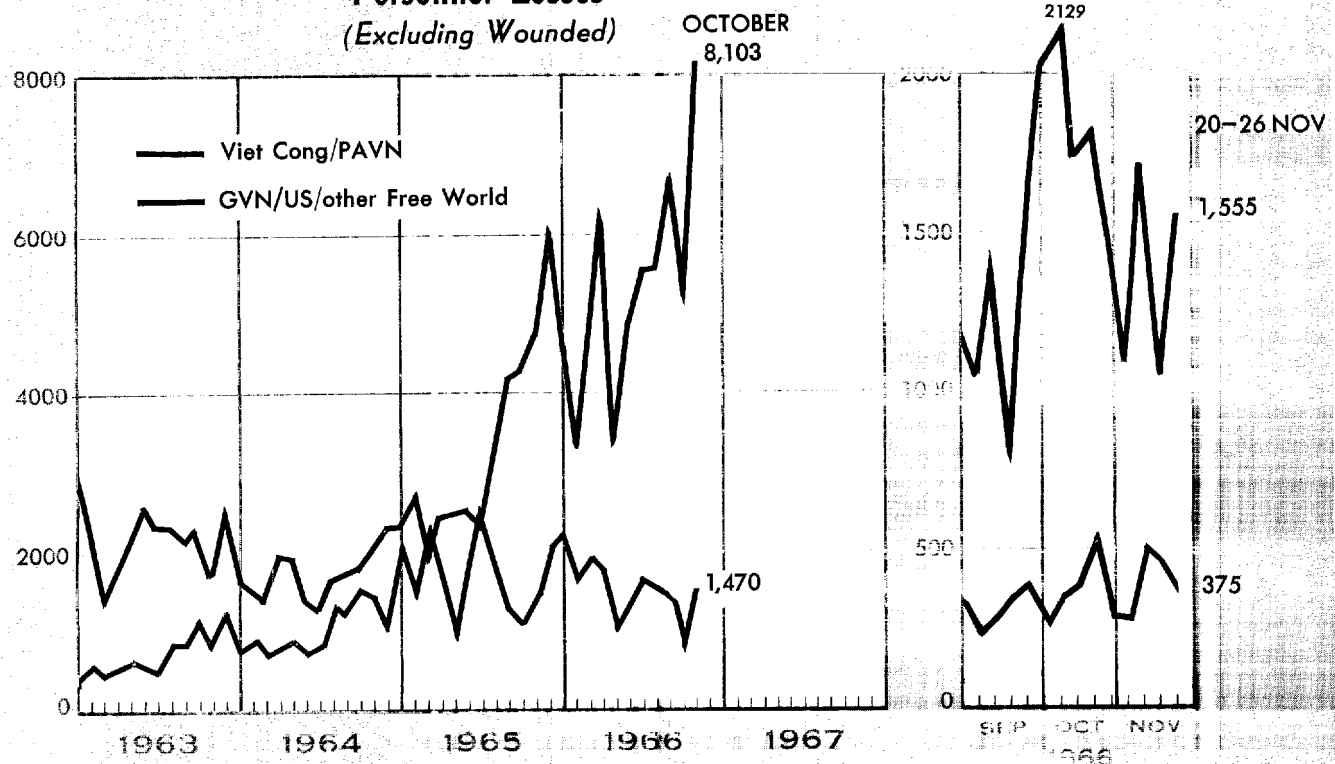
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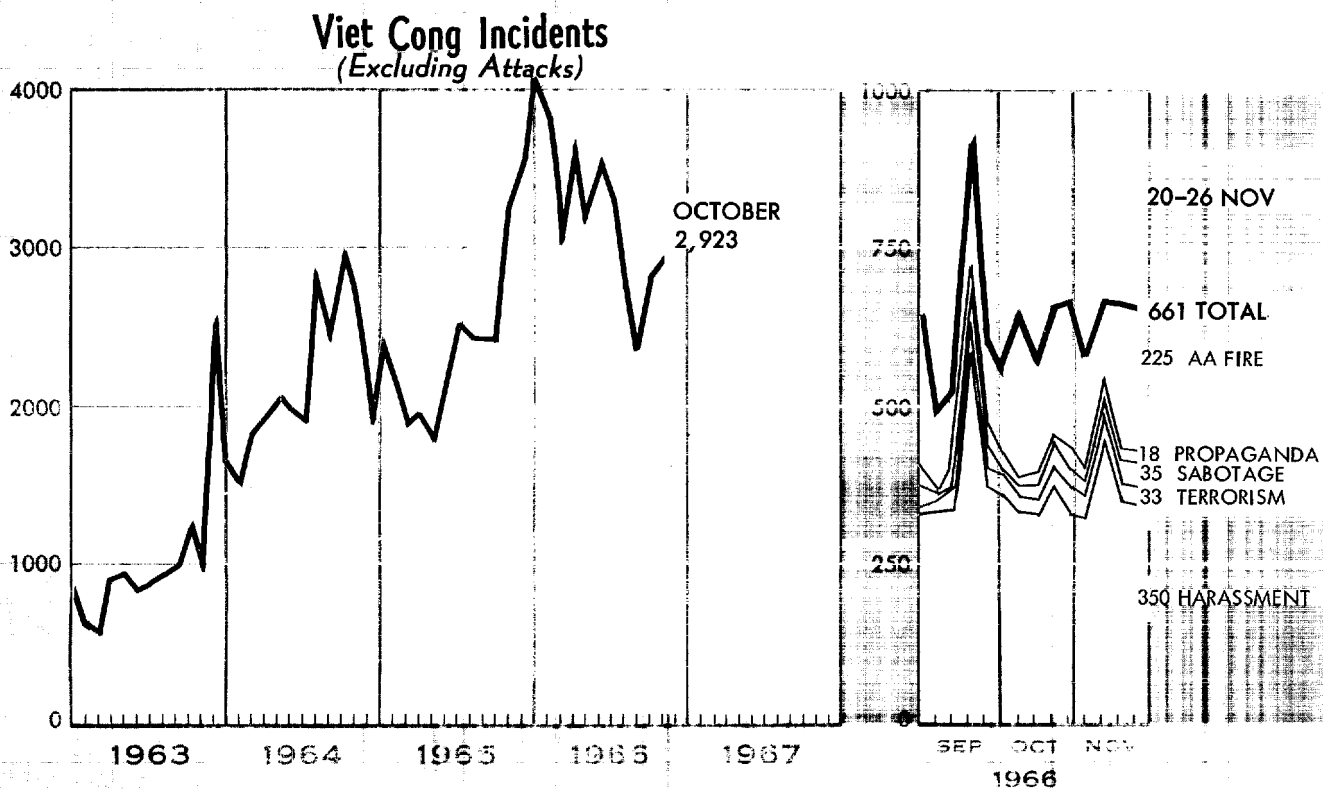
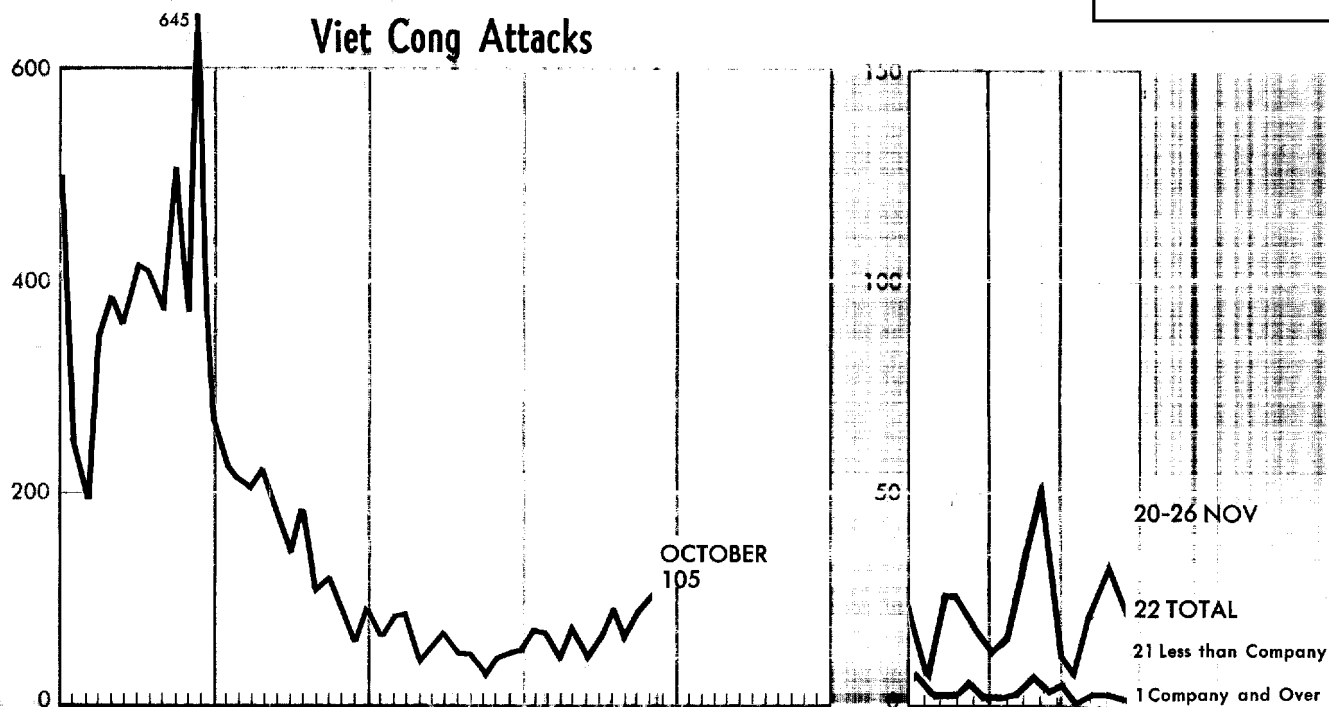
Weapons Losses



Personnel Losses (Excluding Wounded)



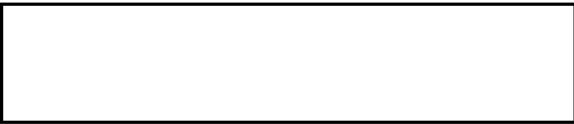
US Casualties to Date: Killed 6,108 Wounded 35,160 Captured 85 Missing 358



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